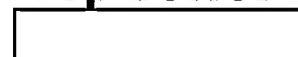


Top Secret



HR

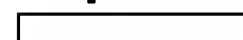


National Intelligence Bulletin

State Dept. review completed

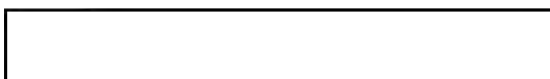
DIA review(s) completed.

Top Secret



March 12, 1975

25X1



No 638

25X1

Approved For Release 2007/03/06 : CIA-RDP79T00975A027500010020-4

Approved For Release 2007/03/06 : CIA-RDP79T00975A027500010020-4

National Intelligence Bulletin

March 12, 1975

CONTENTS

PORTUGAL: Aftermath of unsuccessful coup attempt by rightists. (Page 1)

SOUTH VIETNAM: Second phase of the communists' dry-season offensive has spread. (Page 3)

CAMBODIA: The military situation. (Page 5)

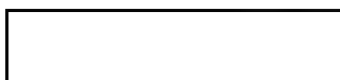


KENYA: Murder of Kenyatta opponent will sharply increase political tension. (Page 9)

ETHIOPIA: Sudanese mediators seem confident the two sides will eventually agree to direct peace talks. (Page 11)

FOR THE RECORD: (Page 12)

ANNEX: Heavy Fighting Ahead in South Vietnam. (Page 13)



National Intelligence Bulletin

March 12, 1975

PORTUGAL

Radicals in the Armed Forces Movement and extreme leftist political groups are moving rapidly to exploit the failure of the coup attempt staged by rightist officers yesterday.

The abortive uprising apparently included only units from Tancos air base--some 60 miles northeast of Lisbon--and some units of the national guard. The move, led by rightist officers, was poorly organized and the attack on the headquarters of an artillery unit near Lisbon airport failed to attract any additional support.

Within three hours of the first shot, spokesmen of the Armed Forces Movement began announcing on Lisbon radio that the situation was under control. Some of their early statements indicated that the Movement was prepared to capitalize on the episode, saying that now the "revolution" can move ahead without impediments.

In a speech to the nation last night, President Costa Gomes denounced the coup attempt as a "reactionary adventure" and linked the plotters to economic sabotage and, by implication, to the political unrest that was manifested in the violence in Setubal last weekend. Costa Gomes also provided a list of 26 officers, headed by conservative former president General Spinoia, who were allegedly involved in the attempt.

25X1

Large crowds of leftist demonstrators roamed the streets of Lisbon and some of Portugal's other major cities last night in response to broadcast appeals to show their support for the Armed Forces Movement. In Lisbon and Oporto, the offices of the conservative and moderate political parties were ransacked.

25X1

National Intelligence Bulletin

March 12, 1975

Large crowds also conducted orderly demonstrations in front of the US embassy in Lisbon where, after some early uncertainty, security forces provided adequate protection.

25X1

A sharp turn to the left by the government could become evident soon. The rightist attempt to dislodge radical leaders might also be used to justify postponement of the election scheduled for April 12. In any event, moderate officers and civilian politicians who were beginning to reassert themselves are likely to draw back from any criticism of the Movement's leadership for fear of being attacked as reactionaries.

25X1

25X1

25X1

National Intelligence Bulletin

March 12, 1975

SOUTH VIETNAM

The second phase of the communists' dry-season campaign is beginning to spread southward, while strong pressure on government positions in the central highlands and northern provinces continues. Tri Tam district town in western Binh Duong Province (see map facing page 15) has been hit by a coordinated communist attack by infantry, armor, and artillery elements. Sporadic fighting around Tay Ninh City is expected to become more intense.

Communist military activity increased substantially in the delta yesterday. In addition to widespread shellings, a number of ground attacks have occurred, particularly around the provincial capital of Moc Hoa and near Ba Tri district town in Kien Hoa Province. Heavier attacks are expected soon in the northern and central delta provinces.

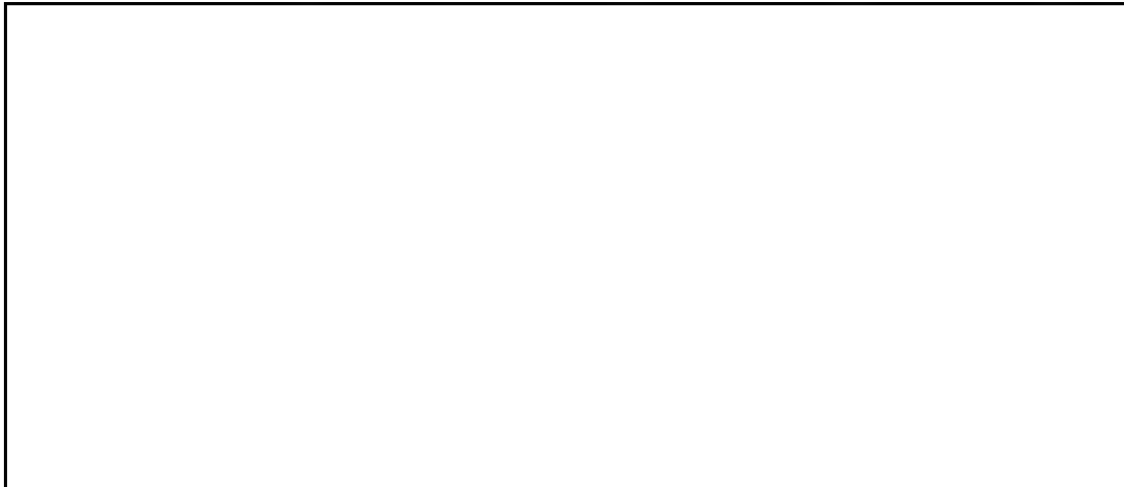
Fighting is continuing at Ban Me Thuot, in the central highlands, the communists' primary target in Military Region 2. Three South Vietnamese ranger battalions have reinforced the defenders, but the situation remains precarious. The major land routes into Ban Me Thuot are still cut, and both airfields are now in communist hands. South Vietnamese army officers believe elements of the North Vietnamese 10th and 320th divisions, as well as an independent regiment, are involved in this action.

Communist forces control some high ground along Route 14 leading into Kontum. Although local commanders are not expecting strong attacks against the city, many civilian residents are leaving for the relative safety of Pleiku City.

The heaviest fighting in the northern provinces is taking place to the west and south of Hue. In Quang Tin Province, where two district capitals were lost on Monday, government forces are regrouping in anticipation of further communist attacks.

National Intelligence Bulletin

March 12, 1975



25X1

- 4 -



25X1

National Intelligence Bulletin

March 12, 1975

CAMBODIA

Commercial DC-8 resupply flights into Pochentong airfield were temporarily suspended on March 11 because of heavier and more accurate rocket and artillery attacks. At least twenty-two 105-mm. howitzer rounds and thirty-four 107-mm. rockets landed on or near the airfield yesterday. Flights by the smaller C-130 aircraft, which have been delivering all of the ammunition, apparently are continuing.

North of Pochentong, government efforts to retake Tuol Leap and push the communists out of rocket and howitzer range of the airfield have bogged down. Elements of the army's 1st Division near the town's southeastern perimeter were forced to fall back following a communist attack on Monday. The operation, which was launched on March 6, apparently is suffering from poor coordination, a general lack of combat initiative, and overly cautious leadership. Until these problems are corrected, the prospects for recapturing Tuol Leap appear dim, making the end of shellings against Pochentong unlikely.

The morale of the 7th Division, which is defending Phnom Penh's northwestern perimeter, has improved considerably following the assignment of a new commander. He promptly initiated operations against the communists and succeeded in reopening Route 51 to the division's logistic base, although it was interdicted again by the Khmer Communists during the night.

The Banam - Neak Luong area is still under heavy attack, but positions at both locations are expected to hold.

[REDACTED] Intense ground fire from the east bank south of the northern narrows sank one armored troop carrier. A larger convoy en route from Neak Luong to Phnom Penh the same day received only light shore fire, with no damage or casualties.

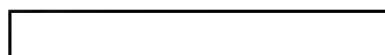
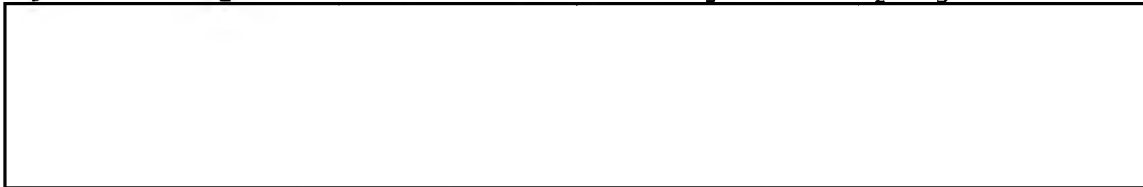
25X1

25X1

National Intelligence BulletinMarch 12, 1975

The communists evidently plan to disrupt such convoy activities by constructing barricades near the northern narrows. Interdiction of this segment of the river would isolate Neak Luong from surface resupply and could lead to a more determined communist effort to capture the town.

Elsewhere in the country, the insurgents are still carrying out attacks against Kampot city as well as against army elements near Battambang and Kompong Cham.



Next 1 Page(s) In Document Exempt

National Intelligence Bulletin

March 12, 1975

KENYA

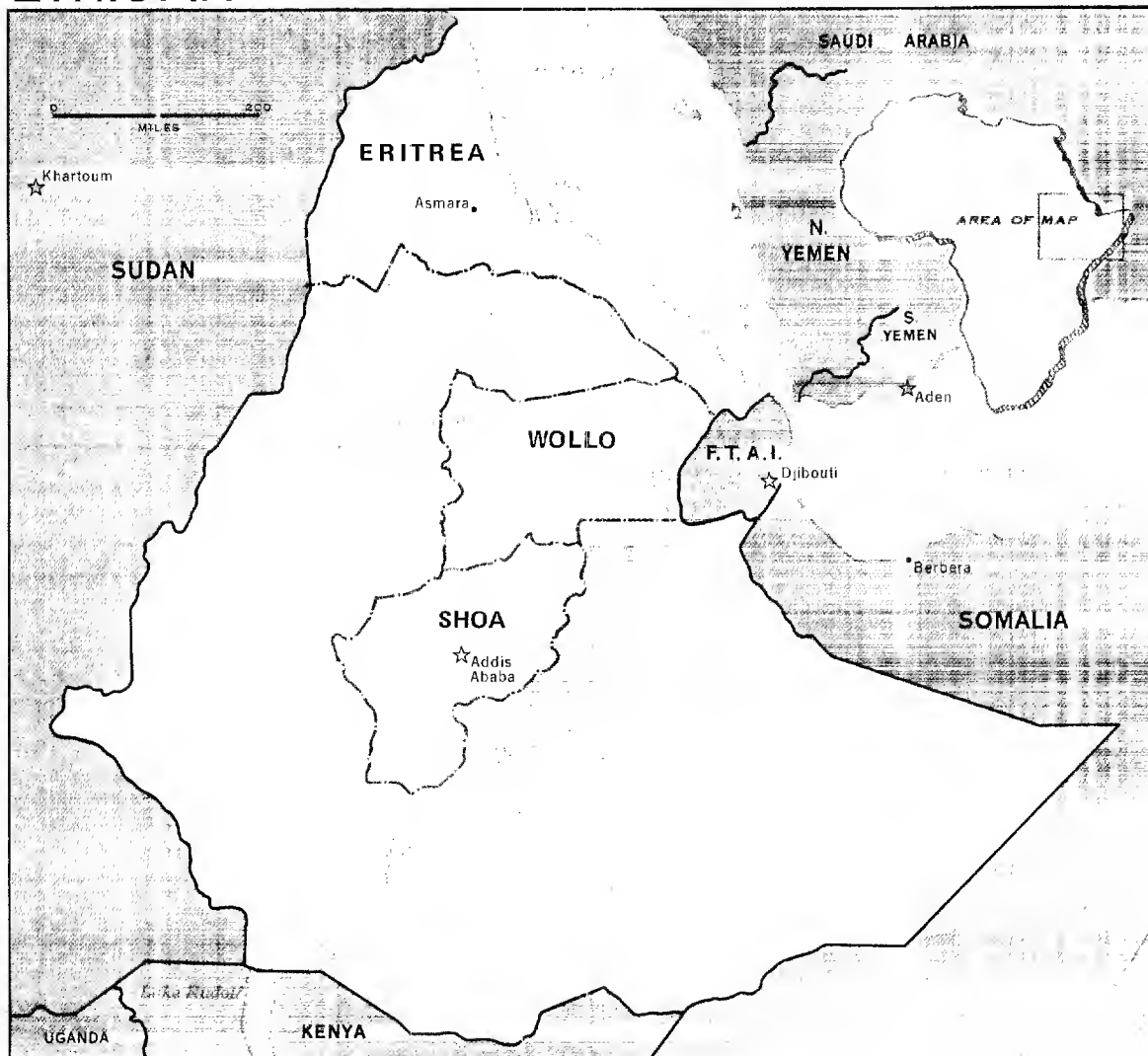
The murder of J. M. Kariuki, an outspoken critic of President Jomo Kenyatta, will sharply increase political tension, already high because of a series of still-unresolved bombings in Nairobi that resulted in 27 deaths.

Kariuki was a leading figure among the Nyeri clan of the Kikuyu tribe. The Nyeri are resentful because Kenyatta's Kiambu clan has received greater benefits from the political system. Kariuki's murder may lead to disorder and violence because the Nyeri members of other tribes considered him a champion of the ordinary Kenyan.

The shooting of Kariuki is reminiscent of the murder in 1969 of Tom Mboya, another popular figure who was a rival to Kenyatta's Kiambu clan. The government then was able to cope with the disorders that resulted. This time, it may be more difficult. Kenyans are more deeply frustrated now about continuing unemployment and inflation, as well as about the accumulation of land and wealth by leading politicians, especially Kenyatta's wife.

In 1969 the police and army remained reliable, but this may have been because Mboya's Luo tribe was not heavily represented in these organizations. The death of a Nyeri Kikuyu will put more of a strain on their loyalty.

ETHIOPIA



557458 3-75

National Intelligence Bulletin

March 12, 1975

ETHIOPIA

The Sudanese, who have talked separately with the Ethiopian government and the Eritrean rebels, seem confident the two sides will eventually come around to the idea of direct peace talks.

A Sudanese Foreign Ministry official yesterday told the US ambassador that an Ethiopian delegation is considering a visit to Khartoum in the near future to explore the specifics of President Numayri's call for talks. He said that rebel representatives, who have publicly rejected the proposal in its present form, also have given hints of coming to Khartoum to confer with the Sudanese about more acceptable terms.

Ethiopian government forces and rebels, meanwhile, are engaging in scattered clashes. At least 25 government troops were killed and 5 wounded during a heavy firefight in western Eritrea last Friday. This is the first report of fighting outside a 75-mile radius of the provincial capital of Asmara since late January.

A sizable government force is continuing sweep operations about ten miles north of Asmara. [REDACTED]

25X1

25X1

[REDACTED] Other clashes have occurred during the past few days along the roads leading both north and south from Asmara.

Opponents of the ruling military council in other areas also are becoming more active. In Shoa Province, where Addis Ababa is located, dissidents from the Galla tribe reportedly staged raids recently along each of the three main roads leading west and north from the capital.

25X1

25X1

National Intelligence Bulletin

March 12, 1975

FOR THE RECORD

USSR-Cuba: Joint training exercises with the Cuban navy probably will not be a feature of the current visit to Havana of the two Soviet navy Krivak-class guided-missile destroyers. Cuban press accounts have referred to the visit as unofficial

25X1

There have been 12 previous visits to Cuba by Soviet warships; joint training exercises have occurred during six visits, while at other times the Soviets have conducted operations on their own. Since January, the Cuban navy has had a fuel shortage, which may, in part, explain why a joint exercise is not likely this time. The Soviet ships themselves apparently have not conducted any operations since their arrival on March 1. There are no indications that a Soviet submarine, which was expected to accompany the destroyers, is in port or near the island.

25X1

[REDACTED]

25X1

Iraq-USSR: Three Soviet Yevgenya-class minesweepers have been delivered to Iraq. These ships, which are designed for clearing mines from inshore waterways like those approaching the ports of Umm Qasr and Basrah, have fiberglass-reinforced plastic hulls, permitting their use against magnetic mines. In addition to the standard mechanical sweeping gear, the craft normally carry underwater television mine-hunting equipment and floodlights that can illuminate up to depths of 30 meters.

25X1

25X1

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

25X1

National Intelligence Bulletin March 12, 1975

ANNEXHeavier Fighting Ahead in South Vietnam

The communists, after a two-month lull, resumed their military campaign in South Vietnam late last week with heavy attacks in several northern provinces and in the central highlands. The signs are clear that the fighting will intensify, especially in the central part of the country. The government lost some territory in the southern half of South Vietnam in the fighting around the turn of the year. It almost certainly will lose more ground before the new communist drive can be blunted.

Such losses should not, by themselves, undermine the South Vietnamese fighting forces. Most of the ground lost will be in fringe areas, and South Vietnamese counterattacks may recapture some of the territory later. The government should be able to emerge from this round of fighting with most of the economically important land and most of the population still under its control. The commitment of several reserve divisions from the North would, however, tilt the balance of forces toward the communists.

Communist Strategy

The communists seem well aware of government supply limitations and realize Saigon is in no position to make an aggressive defense of all its holdings. Hanoi almost certainly believes the opportunity now exists to make sizable territorial gains by hitting the South Vietnamese where they are unlikely to put up a vigorous defense. Hanoi's success in Phuoc Long has reinforced this view.

25X1

25X1



557455 3-75

National Intelligence Bulletin

March 12, 1975

25X1

The North Vietnamese have the capability to step up the fighting on an even larger scale in a few areas of the country if they see an opportunity to inflict a decisive defeat on government forces. They could also work in this direction to take maximum psychological advantage of a communist victory in Cambodia or an adverse vote by the US Congress on supplemental aid to Saigon.

In reviewing the government's situation in the countryside, the North Vietnamese probably concluded that their best chances for substantial gains lie in Kontum, Pleiku, Darlac, Quang Duc, Binh Long, and Tay Ninh. The recent upsurge in action along vital highways serving the highlands confirms communist interest in the area.

The fighting in Darlac, Phu Bon, and Quang Duc over the weekend suggests a main communist thrust will be in that area. The communists also have sufficient forces in the highlands to carry out large-scale attacks in the Pleiku-Kontum areas. The communists probably can take Kontum City and An Loc, the capitals of Kontum and Binh Long provinces, and they can make gains elsewhere along the western frontier.

The North Vietnamese will have a tougher time pushing the government out of the provincial capital of Pleiku. The city is surrounded by a flat plain that will make a frontal assault costly. If, however, the North Vietnamese were able to keep Pleiku isolated for an extended period, it too could fall.

The communists have also opened new fronts along the northern coast, and attacks are likely in Quang Nam and Quang Ngai provinces.

Last fall the communists appeared to believe that Saigon would not fight hard to hold Tay Ninh Province, and our reports suggested that the provincial capital

25X1

National Intelligence Bulletin

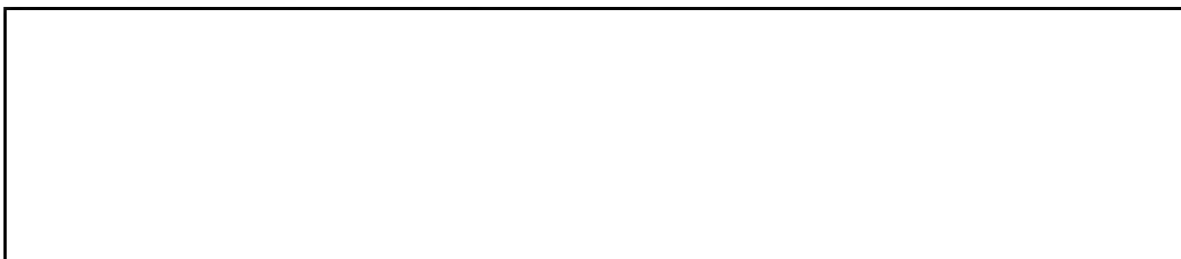
March 12, 1975

would be a primary target of communist forces. Over the past couple of months, however, the South Vietnamese have reinforced their positions in Tay Ninh and have indicated that they are firmly committed to holding the province.

Ample Time

The communists have had ample time to consolidate their gains of December and January and to rebuild the units that took part in the earlier fighting. Moreover, Hanoi has committed additional combat units and is sending in large numbers of replacements. Infiltration into South Vietnam is running substantially higher than a year ago, and most of the manpower is going to southern and central South Vietnam. In the case of the highlands, the total already is the second highest of the war and could soon equal or even exceed that of the 1971-72 dry season.

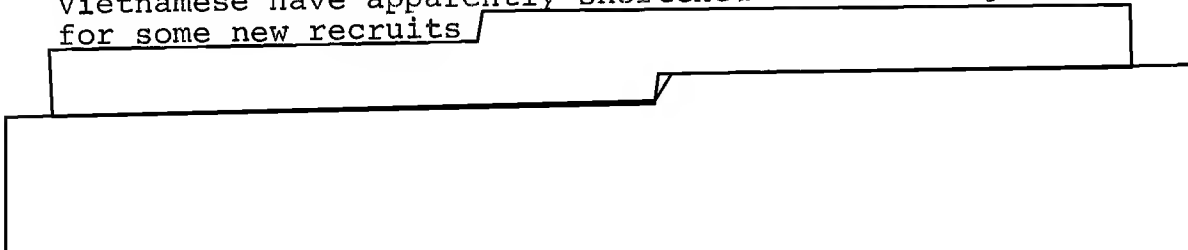
Much of the manpower has arrived, and troops in the pipeline should reach their destinations over the next few weeks. The arrivals significantly exceed communists' losses and should enable them to sustain their forces in new fighting well into the spring.



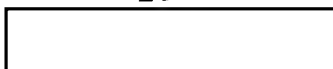
25X1

Hanoi has also taken steps to ensure that it will be able to replace future losses in the South. The North Vietnamese started a major, nationwide induction campaign in January, and it appears to be continuing. The North Vietnamese have apparently shortened the training time for some new recruits

25X1



25X1



25X1

National Intelligence Bulletin

March 12, 1975

The increased recruitment and shortened training indicate Hanoi expects heavy losses over the next few months and is getting more troops ready to send to the South. The replacements will require additional training before they can perform as effectively in combat as those they replace.

25X1

25X1

National Intelligence Bulletin

March 12, 1975

Government Initiatives

In February, following the loss of Phuoc Long, Saigon brought in Lt. Gen. Nguyen Van Toan to command government forces in the region around Saigon. He almost immediately started aggressive military operations against communist forces threatening Tay Ninh. He is optimistic about the government's prospects in the region and believes his forces are more than a match for the communists.

The recent upsurge in fighting in Darlac, Quang Duc, Pleiku, Kontum, and Binh Dinh has caused the military region commander to begin shifting units south to the Darlac - Quang Duc area.

25X1

The South Vietnamese have also stepped up military operations in other parts of the country in an attempt to preempt communist attacks. In the northern provinces, South Vietnamese troops have been using artillery and air strikes against enemy base areas southwest of Da Nang in an effort to prevent the North Vietnamese from massing forces for a new assault.

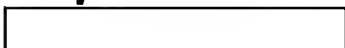
Heavy rains have helped the South Vietnamese cause by washing out a number of roads in communist-controlled areas along the western portion of the region. Weather conditions have improved in the northern provinces, and fresh attacks in Quang Tri and Thua Thien may mark the beginning of a communist push in the northern provinces.

25X1

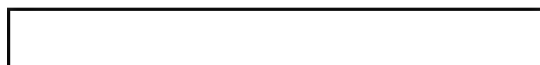
25X1

Top Secret

25X1



Top Secret



25X1